REVOLUTION

socialist youth movement • 30p

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SMASH the G8

INSIDE:

- ✪ Free Mario Bango: anti-fascist activist
- ✪ The G8: fighting the capitalists' international
- ✪ FREEDOM for PALESTINE! ✪

drugs

It has emerged in a recent investigation by the Guardian newspaper that the government's so called 'War on Drugs' policy is fundamentally flawed and is serving no benefit to drug users or to the communities that drug crime has so mercilessly undermined. Anyone on the street could have told them that.

A case study into the role of Richard Eliot, the government's drugs envoy in Bristol, clearly sets out the wastage created by highly bureaucratic procedures. Policies that are supposed to serve as a means to measure productivity are in reality acting as a great hindrance to the overall job that drug workers are trying to do. It is a system where the job of measurements and data collection, reporting and target meeting is an obsession and where the needs of the most vulnerable part of society cannot be seen through the mist of the paperwork.

In Bristol the bureaucracy is explained: "44 different funding streams, each one with its own detailed guidance and micro targets from the centre, each one with its own demand for a detailed business plan and quarterly reports back to the centre; the endless service agreements to sign with every local provider with their own micro targets and a demand for quarterly reports back to be collated and passed back to the centre; the new annual drugs availability report to the centre; annual treatment plan to the centre over 68 pages and 9 planning grids with 82 objectives; the funding announced too late for planning and then handed over too late to be spent and finally spent for spending's sake to prevent it being reclaimed by the centre." Elliott claims that 40% of his and his staff's time is spent on organising services for drugs users, the rest on administration. His resignation memo was entitled 'Ravings of a burnt out mind'.

The culture of control in Whitehall is described: "monitoring has become almost religious in its status, as has centralised control… The demand for quick hits and early wins is driven by a central desire analogous to the instant gratification demands made by drug users themselves… The criminal gangs that control the market are laughing all the way to the bank as we tie ourselves in knots with good practice guidelines and monitoring"

Clearly the 'War on Drugs' cannot be won in this way. Organised drug cartels do not care about people or policy, yet they still seem to be pretty efficient in the business they are in. The only way to defeat them is to legalise drugs. This would cut the rug out from under the black market, low quality drugs and the money made could be put into a real plan to alleviate drug addiction and the poverty of life that creates it.

If the government turned its efforts onto supplying clean drugs to the hundreds of drug users that die from impure substances, they might be successful at decreasing the number that die. But we know that the government is not concerned with the safety or the lives of drug users. The fact that of the 500,000 UK class A drug users only 1,328 will emerge drug free at the end of the year shows the inefficiency of the drugs policy and outlines the wasteful use of the £390m allocated for the drugs policy last year.

Rather than helping addicts get over their addiction by allocating resources to help them, the government are more interested in quick fix policies. Policies that will make them look like they are tackling issues by throwing money at drug workers with strict and often unworkable conditions attached as to how the money should be used.

by sue in walthamstow

WANKER OF THE MONTH

DONALD RUMSFELD

Ah, the Bush Administration. Their smug, stupid smiles interminably repeating, among other meaningless mantra, "weapons of mass destruction in the wrong hands are a threat to peace". Of all the members of this warmongering outfit, US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is the 'politician' I most want to choke on these words. This old hawk's personal ambition has proved time and again to be decidedly at odds with the goal of "creating a secure world". The most recent example of his hypocrisy has earned him the title of Wanker of the Month.

From 1990 to 2001, Rumsfeld sat on the board of ABB, a company which three years ago sold two light water nuclear reactors to North Korea. As a non-executive director of the Zurich based engineering giant, he earned $190,000 a year. Now Dumb Don thinks its ok that he's one of the loudest voices in the Washington chorus that has named North Korea as part of the "axis of evil". He has the nerve to echo Bush's citing of the country as a target for "regime change" due to its efforts to build nuclear weapons.

To hear the damning declarations he makes now, it would be reasonable to assume that, at the very least, Rumsfeld would have spoken out in 2000 against the sale of nukes to North Korea. But Don did no such thing because he was only interested in his own profit and the furthering of his own career. A spokesman for Rumsfeld said that the defence secretary did not "recall it being brought before the board at any time". But ABB said that all board members were told about the $200m (£125m) contract to provide the design and key components for the reactors.

Being selective about when he speaks up against things is Rumsfeld's forte. If it's a man without principles you're after, he's your guy! In 1984, the UN concluded that Saddam was using chemical weapons against Iran. Rumsfeld kept quiet about this, however, rejecting an opportunity to draw attention to Iraq's alleged threat to international security at a time when evidence was available. (Unlike now when the absence of proof that Iraq has been developing chemical or biological weapons has completely nullified the arguments The Coalition used to try to justify attacking Iraq.)

Rumsfeld's reasons for staying silent in 1984 are clear. As President Ronald Reagan's Middle East envoy, he had visited Baghdad the previous year for friendly talks with Saddam Hussein. They discussed "topics of mutual interest," according to the Iraqi Foreign Ministry. "[Saddam] made it clear that Iraq was not interested in making mischief in the world," Rumsfeld later told The New York Times. "It struck us as useful to have a relationship, given that we were interested in solving the Mideast problems." How things change…

Donald H. Rumsfeld once said, "Arguments of convenience lack integrity and inevitably trip you up." How many more times is he going to fall flat on his face before he takes his own advice?

Rumsfeld tells it like it isn't:

☆ *"Politics is human beings; it's addition rather than subtraction."*

☆ *"In politics, every day is filled with numerous opportunities for serious error. Enjoy it."*

☆ *"If in doubt, don't. If still in doubt, do what's right."*

☆ *"Don't blame the boss. He has enough problems."*

LUCY IN LEICESTER

REVOLUTION

We are the faceless
We are the dead
We are the voice in society's head -
We are the choiceless
blind and weak
We are those unafraid to speak
But we will rise up
given time
We don't need you
to give us a sign
We will rise.

We will defeat you
Mr Blair

Because you made students
Pay for education
Because you privatised
a nation
Because you created pickets
at the fire station
Because you have a
useless occupation
We will rise up
We will defeat you.

We are the radical face
of youth
We will bleed and die
for the truth
We will support Iraq
We don't need proof
We will rise
For every young face
in Genoa

by alex in manchester

BBC lies

On Friday 14th February, I joined a group of students from Manchester and other anti-war activists, mainly from London, as we occupied the BBC's Bush House. We were protesting about the one-sided coverage of the war. This goes against the BBC's Royal Charter, which states:

"Treat controversial subjects with due accuracy and impartiality, both in the Corporation's news services and in the more general field of programs dealing with matters of public policy or of political or industrial controversy, and do not contain any material expressing the opinion of the Corporation on current affairs or matters of public policy."

We marched the short distance from SOAS University to Bush House. When we got there, the plan was to walk slowly and casually into the building one or two at a time, so that security wasn't alerted. Once the security was alerted, the plan was to then rush the doors, in a final attempt to get as many people as possible into the building. However, the rush was not needed - we all just walked in, in small groups, and the security did nothing but watch. Everyone who entered the building did so peacefully.

The BBC, however, were not happy the lies they spurt out on the war every day just wasn't enough for them. The report they released on the occupation was crammed so full of lies, that it confirmed the fact for me that the BBC lie.

In the report, the first lie came when they said '50 intruders barged their way in.' There was no barging going on. Lie number 2 came when they said we were 'rounded up' and 'apprehended by security guards and police officers'. We were not rounded up, or apprehended, we were asked to leave once or twice. No one forced us to leave - we left after we had finished our action.

There were strong implications that we could have been connected to the Real IRA in the report, although they didn't actually state this, the very fact that the would mention the Real IRA is suspicious. 'The intrusion came less than two years after the Real IRA detonated a bomb outside BBC Television Centre in west London.' At the end of the report the mentioned the Real IRA again. 'Security measures at the BBC Television Centre at White City were tight before the Real IRA bomb.' This would clearly leave an imprint on the minds of readers. It may lead people to believe that the Real IRA and the anti-war movement are connected in some way. This of course is incorrect, and personally, I think the unnamed reporter should be dreadfully ashamed of themselves.

They also said that 'the incident took place some time before the start of the anti-war demonstration - it is not known whether the two events were connected.' According to the report, it was the very morning of the demonstration. It was in fact the night before, and we were chanting anti-war slogans the whole time we were there. I think it would be safe to assume that they were connected.

To sum up, perhaps we should feel sorry for BBC reporters, perhaps they have to lie, maybe they are paid to do it, or they might have built-in lie machines, who knows? All I know is the BBC do lie.

peter in manx

Come to London to

Disarm DSEi 2003

DSEi (Defence Systems Equipment International) is the largest European arms fair of 2003, and is being held in the beginning of September in East London. It will see the likes of Lockheed and Martin, BAE Systems, Raytheon and Rolls-Royce plus hundreds of other exhibitors all displaying their wares to facilitate people to kill other people. Most of the exhibitors who will descend on the Excel centre between the 9th and 12th September had their technology used by the 'allied' invaders of Iraq. If you opposed the recent (illegal and immoral I might add) war on Iraq then you should oppose this upcoming trades fair.

Back at the 2001 DSEi a third of the nations present were involved in some form of conflict. It's arms fairs like DSEi that make government's believe that they need a bomb costing $200,000 instead of spending it on something useful - perhaps on the health service or on schools. Then again killing people is more fun! During the 1990s it is estimated that at least four million people died in violent conflicts. The vast majority (at least 90%) were civilians. Without the arms trade that wouldn't have been possible - which is why we have to show we won't tolerate it!

A series of actions are being planned to oppose the arms dealers ranging from a march the Saturday before through central London, to more effective autonomous direct action protests to try and shut it down! During the summer there'll be a series of meetings to plan out action. We have three months to try and make this huge!

www.dsei.org

has anyone seen this man?

palestinian rap

Whats goin on in the world today
we got kids gettin sniped by snipers with AK's
but thats OK they aint got the same faith
got the same face
displaced hate turns life into waste
throw a rock at a tank and you'll get chased by a bullet
and you wonder why a suicide bomber wants to make a hit
so if you keep firin they'll keep firin
and I'll be cryin while you're all fryin in HELL
Does this fuckin shit ring a bell
No that's no surprise to me
because in this society ignorance is a theme
peace is just a dream
unattainable with the times current minds it seems
and it is now time now its time to come clean
in this world so obscene there cruelty runs like a stream
Yeah it's fuckin time to come clean

we sow hate, violence and discrimination
so what we gonna reap is death and damnation
we sow hate violence and discrimination
and what we gonna reap is eternal damnation

So you want to know a fuckin thing or two
about this shit from my point of view
it seems to be tolerated apartheid
Bush acting with global dominance on his mind
it's easy to ignore the information is hard to find
but of this persecution there is no harsher kind
CNN won't cover it no they seem oblivious
it's just racism isn't it fuckin obvious
now it's your choice to care or not care
keep your eyes open or fake like your blind
either way people are going to continue to die
turn on MTV and you'll see rappers only talkin about gettin high
they are pawns of the media distracting your mind
you need to fight to keep your mind free of the medias bind
large scale brain washing if anyone else did it it would be a crime
so we go on reaping what we sow
and what we sow most people don't even know

WE SOW HATE, VIOLENCE and discrimination
what your gonna reap is death and damnation
we sow hate and violence with little hesitation
what we gonna reap is eternal damnation

by matt in canada

MAPPING OUT

Flushed with the success of seizing Iraq, the US finally published its 'Roadmap to Solution of Israeli-Palestinian conflict' on 30 April 2002. We've seen it all before: Oslo, Barak's "generous offers". All have been loaded in favour of Israel and all have ended in failure. The current roadmap is no different.

It was only published after Arafat was sidelined in favour of Abu Mazen, a 'moderate' political figure deemed acceptable by Tel Aviv and Washington. Mazen is from the right-wing of Fatah and does not support the Intifada. He enjoys little popular support and shows no signs of being able to control the radical elements in Hamas and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade.

A map to peace?

The Roadmap proposes 3 phases leading to the creation of a 'viable Palestinian state' by 2005. Phase 1 requires the Palestinian Authority to crack down on and disarm militant groups such as Hamas and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. Only when Washington decides that the Palestinians have done enough will the Israelis have to withdraw troops, and then only from areas occupied since the beginning of the second Intifada in September 2000.

Phase 2 talks of the 'option of creating an independent Palestinian state' with 'provisional borders' and 'attributes of sovereignty'. This will be decided by the US, the EU, the UN and Russia.

Phase 3 proposes to settle all outstanding issues such as the status of Jerusalem and the right of return for Palestinian refugees. But these issues are only spoken of in vague terms.

Recipes for failure

So can this Road Map succeed where all others have failed? The answer is NO. Israel has yet to show that it is serious about peace and is prepared to make the concessions, which would even make a two-state solution viable. As late as Thursday 22 May, the Israeli Housing Ministry announced it was going to build 502 new homes in Ma'aleh Adumim, a Jewish settlement between Jerusalem and Jericho. According to the Road Map, there should be a freeze on all settlement activity.

Israel's murdering hands

Over the past few months Israeli soldiers have shot dead two activists from the International solidarity movement (ISM). Rachel Corrie, a US activist, was crushed to death by an Israeli bulldozer on the 16th March. She was wearing a fluorescent orange shirt that marked her out as an international and she had just spoken to the soldier in the bulldozer. On the 11th April Tom Hurndall was shot in the head by Israeli soldiers while trying to protect Palestinian children and is now in a coma that the doctors say he will never wake from. His parents are currently trying to raise the £20,000 needed to bring his body back home. In addition to this, on May 2nd the IDF shot dead James Miller, a British cameraman who was working on a documentary about the effects of the Occupation on the children of Palestine with the well known journalist Saira Shah. At the time of the shooting they were filming Israeli soldiers preparing to demolish another house. When they left the house they were filming in and started to walk towards the two Israeli armoured personal carriers outside James was wearing a helmet with the word 'TV' in bright yellow fluorescent writing. The group walked towards the tanks waving a white flag and shouting in Arabic and English that they were International journalists. At this point they were shot at and James was hit

joe sacco

Israel has said that each of these killings were unfortunate 'accidents'. We say these are acts of cold-blooded murder. All these killings took place in the south of the Gaza Strip in a town called Rafah. Why? Because these activists and camera crew were witnesses to the horrific, humiliating and indiscriminate treatment of the Palestinians. Here the IDF carry out daily house demolitions sometimes with only a few minutes notice. Most families in Rafah live with the constant fear of losing their homes and loved ones. Children are shot at on their way to school and there are growing reports of children being shot at whilst sitting at their desks in

APARTHEID

Sharon's response has been all too predictable. The day after the Road Map was published, the Israeli army attacked Gaza City killing 12, including a 2 year-old child.

On 13 May, the IDF raided Rafah, a densely populated Refugee camp in Gaza. Five buildings were destroyed and three Palestinians killed. The rest of Gaza was sealed off on the pretext that a terrorist attack was imminent. These and other provocations brought the inevitable response from Palestinian militants. Three suicide bombings in as many days killed at least 12 Israelis and injuring around 18 in the middle of May.

Only half of Sharon's cabinet has grudgingly accepted the road map, but with many conditions attached. He has also declared that the Palestinian refugees who fled 50 years ago will never be allowed back because they would threaten the existence of the Jewish state.

Israel is continuing to create "facts on the ground" - expanding the illegal Jewish settlements, which currently house 200,000. The most visible measure of this is the construction of Israel's security fence at the cost of $1 million per mile. Under the guise of security, this wall (part electrified fence, part concrete wall) is cutting into Palestinian territory creating a physical border. The "green line" which is the internationally recognised border, is being ignored. The World Bank estimates that the wall will annex a further 12% of the West Bank by the time it is finished. The town of Qalqiliyah is now closed off by the wall with the only exit controlled by the IDF. Nearby Jewish settlements continue to encroach on Palestinian land. On 14 May, the Guardian reported from Azzun Atma, a small West Bank village where the security fence will cut through the olive groves and encircle the village. The nearby Jewish settlement of Sha'are tiqva is slowly encroaching on the land.

A two state solution flowing from the road map would look much like the offer Barak made in 2000 which was rejected by Arafat. A Palestine without control of its borders, airspace or vital water supplies. Jewish settlements scattered within the new

the apartheid wall to surround the west bank and gaza

Palestinian state guarded by a permanent Israeli military presence to protect them. In short, apartheid, based upon the bantustans of South Africa.

The fact remains that a Jewish state in the Middle East only came into being in 1949 by dispossessing the Palestinians. The Road Map is an inadequate compromise, which does not address the fundamental desire of the Palestinian people for national self-determination, or rights the wrongs of half a century. The only just solution is the end to the exclusive nature of a "Jewish state". The only just solution is a secular state where both Jews and Palestinians can live side by side with equal rights.

by yuen in lewisham

come down on the international activists

their classroom! Refugee camps with dirty water and cramped conditions, high unemployment rates, checkpoints and tanks rolling through the streets - this is the life of Palestinians in Rafah and throughout Gaza and the West Bank. Activists from the ISM have been going out to Palestine for the past few years to bear witness the barbaric treatment of Palestinians by Israel, but now Israel has decided to extend its campaign of terror to the internationals who dare to speak out. They don't want any witnesses to what they are doing and they are now prepared to kill activists to scare them away and to stop the story of what's really happening in Gaza and the West Bank to reach the world.

Following the recent incident of the British suicide bomber in Tel Aviv, who killed three Israelis, the British Government released a statement giving Israeli their full support in finding the 'terrorists'. They arrested 6 people who were connected with the suicide bombers in what seems like 'collective punishment', exactly how Israel punishes anyone connected to suicide bombers from Palestine. However Israel has shot dead three British citizens (Ian Hook was also killed last year whilst heading a UN project in the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank) and the British government has done nothing. No public statement to condemn the actions of Israel, no promise of an independent inquiry into the deaths. Instead, they have actually refused to defend the British nationals. They have stated that any British citizen who goes to the Occupied Terrorities against the government's advice will not be defended even if they are murdered in cold blood, as in the cases of Tom Hurndall and James Miller. In addition the Israeli government has desperately tried to link the two British suicide bombers with the ISM in an attempt to discredit their work. They are trying to prove that the ISM are engaged in acts of terrorism so that any action the Israelis take against the ISM will be justified by the 'war against terrorism'. Meanwhile, Israel continues to wage its campaign of terror on the Palestinians and the Internationals who go out to stand in solidarity with them. Activists are being rounded up and deported. They will now have to sign a declaration before entering Gaza and the West Bank which states that if they are shot whilst in Gaza, even if they are killed, the IDF bear no responsibility. This is Israel's latest attempt to scare activists away and to stop us from reporting the truth but we will not be intimidated. We will continue to expose the lies behind the killings in Palestine. We say 'Victory to the Intifada!'

If you would like to help us to expose Israel's lies, here's what you can do.

- Organise a meeting at your school, college or workplace.
- Contact REVOLUTION who has activists who can come over and give you an eyewitness account of the atrocities being carried out in Palestine.
- We also have videos and literature.
- So get in touch and show your solidarity with the people of Palestine and the activists who go out there and help us tell the world the truth.

by rekha in streatham

THE G8 They have their we need ours

The leaders of the G8, the eight richest countries in the world – the USA, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan and Russia – are having their yearly meeting in Evian, France, from June 1st to 3rd. The meetings are like an executive board meeting of a large company where the main players like Bush, Blair & Chirac etc., sit down and come up with the next years strategy to maintain their dominant position and control of the world resources and people. When they have come up with their plan, they then use their control of their international institutions like the IMF, World Bank, World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the UN to ensure that their plan is put into effect.

Every time they meet, huge protests take place. That is why they now choose to meet in remote places that protesters can't reach. This year they have chosen the mountain town of Evian in France. Up to 100,000 protesters are expected to demonstrate in nearby Geneva and Lausanne, with anti-G8 "villages" set up near Evian to allow people to get even closer. The entire area for 20 km has been declared a "red zone" and closed off by the French government. The roads in are blocked by barbed wire, missile batteries, and 15,000 French and Swiss soldiers and police (and a few German cops thrown in) just in case the missile batteries and barbed wire are not enough!

But the protests are not enough in themselves to stop the plans of the G8. If we want to stop them, the anti-capitalist movement has to start to build it's own international organisation where we meet, debate and decide democratically our plans and strategy to defeat the G8 and the capitalist system.

The protests that took place against the meeting of the WTO in Seattle in November 1999 inspired people all over the world to protest outside the international meetings of the world's rulers like the G8 and International Monetary Fund. Since then the anti-capitalist movement has mobilised millions to take to the streets all over the world to end third world debt, poverty, exploitation and militarism. It has organised social forums on every continent which have attracted thousands of anti-capitalist activists. It has organised global joint days of action and has made the idea of international solidarity a real and practical experience for thousands which has helped strengthen the resistance to capitalism everywhere.

We have been able so far to co-ordinate our actions and activities through the use of the internet and through face-to-face meetings. At the European Social Forum held in Florence in November last year, the anti-capitalist movement made the call for a world wide demonstration against the US and Britain's imperialist war on Iraq. What a success it was! 30 million people marched all over the world on February 15th. It was the biggest ever co-ordinated international mobilisation against imperialism and it sent shock waves around the world.

We have shown that we can shake the world but we need to change it. Even though the anti-capitalist movement was able to mobilise millions against the war in the biggest ever demonstrations in human history, we were not able to stop it. This was because we didn't have the ability to call on millions of workers to stop work and bring the capitalist system to a halt.

Lots of trade union leaders and leaders of political parties that claimed to fight for the interests of working class people made many a speech against the war, but when it came to the time for decisive action, they were nowhere to be found.

Similarly, in the anti-capitalist movement we have many so called leaders (like Susan George of ATTAC) who have written books outlining the faults of capitalism but whose only strategy to change it is to try and reform the worst aspects of capitalism.

The anti-capitalist movement has many more people who can expose, analyse and condemn the capitalist system. But unlike the leaders of G8, we have no common programme – a guide to action based on the hard-learned lessons of 150 years of anti-capitalist struggle – to change the world in our interests.

At present we can and do discuss and debate the need for "another world". But we have not set our selves the common goal for the overthrow of capitalism and the building of the other world we all want to see.

G8 meeting in Evian: big brother is in the house

8 Strangers meet in a big house in the Alps to meet, chat, plot against each other…

It will be all smiles for the cameras in Evian, as this club of the leaders of the 8 richest countries sits down to wine and dine, deciding the world's fate for another year. One thing they can all unite around is how to squeeze as much profit as possible out of the world. But as they sit around the sofas sipping their fabulously expensive wine, tensions will emerge.

2 housemates who won't be playing in the hot tub together are George Bush and Chirac. Bush won't forgive the perma-tanned French president for his refusal to support the war in Iraq.

That particular argument is over, since the US has successfully seized Iraq's oilfields and shut out the European powers. But this tension will underlie the entire G8 – after all, there is already a winner. The USA is the world's only superpower, with an economy equivalent to those of the other G8 countries combined, and its military bigger than the next ten put together. Ganging up on the US and voting them off isn't an option - yet.

So for now they will have to put up with George Bush sticking up two fingers up to the EU, insisting that the US will use its power to attack countries and reorder the Middle East - and the world - in the interests of its oilmen and multinationals. And the Euro imperialists can't do anything about it! C'est la vie!

Tricks and mirrors.

Of course there are some thing the imperialist countries of the G8 all agree on. Chirac and Bush will raise their glasses to toast the struggle to reduce the third world debt – by as little as possible, that is. Every year at the G8 Summit there are speeches and "initiatives" to cancel the terrible burden of debt on the poorest countries. 5 years ago at the G8 meeting in Birmingham, UK, 70,000 people protested against the third world debt in the first large scale protest against the G8. As a result the G8 governments promised to cut $110 billion of third world debt.

This was a drop in the bucket of the third world's huge, snowballing, un-payable debt, which passed the $2 trillion mark last year. Even so, the Jubilee Debt Campaign estimates that these governments have cancelled only $36.5 billion since 1997 – less than a third of their commitment! The G8 countries spend hundreds of billions of dollars on weapons and war. Yet they continue to squeeze the poorest countries for billions in debt, killing 19,000 kids a day! You won't hear that confession in the multinational media diary room.

The real power

While there's no possibility that the mass of humanity will be able to pick up their mobile phone and text-vote these parasites off of their plush alpine perch, there are some people with a bit of leverage on these Presidents and PMs. Unfortunately it is the people as wealthy and powerful as they are – the heads of multinationals, banks and their lobby groups like the International

by sean in london

international

To really defeat "the war on terror", end third world debt, fight poverty and to bring justice to millions of oppressed people like the Palestinians, we need to mobilise millions against the capitalist system - the system that creates inequality and oppression, the system that holds us all down.

The networks, forums and meetings that the anti-capitalist movement has used to date have show that we can co-ordinate action on an international scale but if we want to stop the G8 and get rid of capitalism we need an even higher level of unity on a international scale.

For that we need to build our own international organisation to take on and defeat the international organisations of the ruling class like the G8, IMF etc...

We can no longer be content just to co-ordinate actions. It is not enough. We need to build an organisation of millions of young people and workers that can provide an alternative to the misery of capitalism. An international party that will fight for a working class government and working class power. A party that can draw together the lessons of the struggles of our brothers and sisters all over the world, and democratically debate and decide on a strategy for taking on the plans of the bosses and their organisations all over the world.

Such an organisation is no dream. In fact it is such a real and burning necessity that anti-capitalist workers and young people and done it four times before. Each of these four Internationals (that is what they have come to be know as) arose out of the need to take the offensive against capitalism on an international scale.

If we really want to change the world - and millions have shown that they do - we need to build an international again for the fifth time to really take the fight to the G8 and the war mongering rulers of the world like Bush and Blair.

Chamber of Commerce, US Business Roundtable, and European Roundtable of Industrialists. In a letter to the G8 leaders, 6 of these powerful business organisations are petitioning the G8 leaders to bury the hatchet over Iraq and focus on picking up where they left off with the World Trade Organisation negotiations in 2001 – this year the WTO is meeting in September in Mexico.

They want to see 4 things come out of the G8 summit. First, they want the governments to agree to complete their negotiations for further "trade liberalisation" at the WTO in Cancun, so that these huge corporations can get even richer off of privatising and asset-stripping the third world. Secondly, they've got no problem with the 'War on Terror' cutting our civil rights, but insist that it must not obstruct trade and lose them money. Next, corporate scandals such as the collapse of Enron are bad for business of course, but there should be no laws to regulate corruption, just "voluntary initiatives" by big business itself. Lastly they want to ensure that patents are respected so that they can protect their bloated brand names and stop other businesses in the third world producing the same goods for less money – CD's, software, medicines, trainers, and so on. You can bet the G8 leaders will listen to that agenda.

The guns behind globalisation.

Of course with all that poverty, there will be a lot of anger out there. Revolts against capitalism's effects are rocking Latin America from Argentina to Colombia. The heroic Intifada of the Palestinian people is sending shockwaves through the Middle East, destabilising the USA's control of the region. Iraq is far from stable and guerrilla movements in South and South East Asia are smoldering away.

The answer of the USA and its G8 wannabees to this is dictatorship and war.

At least two thirds of all global arms sales and military aid in the last 5 years came from five members of the G8, with the USA being top supplier. US arms sales directed to developing countries have quadrupled from 2000 to 2001, many of them with armed forces that persistently abuse human rights. US military aid is currently furnished to more than 30 countries identified by the US itself as having a "poor" human rights record—or worse. It has continued to sell sophisticated weaponry to Israel—including 52 F-16 fighter jets and six Apache attack helicopters in 2001- despite the fact that these weapons are used in cities, and have killed and wounded hundreds of civilians in Palestine.

Capitalism is a disaster for the world, and its getting worse. These leaders control the world from their isolated compound in the Evian Alps. It will take a revolution to boot all of this lot out and off our screen for ever.

by andy in leeds

The four other internationals – a brief guide.

The First international was formed in 1864. It was originally known as the International Working Men's Association, and Marx and Engels were some of the key leaders. It was the first time the thousands of workers from around the world were rallied to such an global organisation. It showed that lots of different forces could be won to setting up an international. One of the major debates was between the anarchists and the socialists. The anarchists didn't believe that the working class should fight to win working class power, where as the socialists did (and the debate continues to today). This pretty much paralysed the first international and led to splits (fundamental differences). But what destroyed the international was the failure of the Paris commune (uprising by workers in Paris in 1871) and the period of reaction that followed. All across Europe anti-socialist and anti-working class laws were passed which basically outlawed the international.

The Second International was formed in 1889 in Paris. It showed that mass working class parties could be built though political agitation in the unions, through standing in elections and though widespread political actions. But it also showed that where a labour bureaucracy arises (like the union leaders of today) and makes deals with capitalism, it will sell out and sabotage the struggle for working class power. In the fact the leaders of the different national parties of the second international ended up supporting the first world war and sending workers from different countries to fight each other on behalf of the bosses. The Labour Party and the French and German socialist parties all come from the second international.

The Third International was formed in 1919. It was formed after the Russian anti-capitalist revolutionaries, the Bolsheviks, took power and overthrew capitalism in Russia in 1917. Millions of workers, who were disgusted with the betrayals of the Second International and inspired by the working class taking power in Russia, rallied to the banner of the Third International. It showed how to combine maximum democracy with strict centralism for implementing democratically decided decisions on an international level. This meant that national parties had to respect and carry out the decisions taken at an international level. This way it was able to ensure that different parties could resist national pressures and carry out common revolutionary actions. But the third failed because Stalin and his followers were able to take over the leadership by bureaucratic manoeuvres. When they did they destroyed all the democracy and drove out all those who would not blindly follow the line of Stalin. No international can be build without the fullest democracy.

The Fourth International was formed in 1937. It's leading figure was Leon Trotsky, one of the leaders of the Russian Revolution. It never reached the mass proportions of the other three. But it did keep alive the spirit of revolution and the revolutionary lessons learnt from the other three – the need for the working class to take power; the need for the fullest democracy in the movement; and the need for internationalism and not national centred politics. But it also gave us the example of the programme as a guide to action that concretely links the daily struggles of the working class to the need to take power. The Fourth International collapsed as a revolutionary organisation in the 1950's. It was disorientated after the stability that followed the second world war, and it gave up its independent working class politics and adapted it politics to the left wing of the social democratic parties and the Stalinist communist parties. It split in 1954 and the splits split many times after that.

A Letter to Susan George✪

Dear Susan George,

At the Globalise Resistance conference in London a few weeks ago, in a session called "Life After Capitalism" you said:

"I don't know what revolution means in this era"

Now, I'm not sure if this is true (you know, you only ever had to ask...) but if it is, it seems to me that this is one of several questions that we need to clear up...

What we decide about what revolution means to us now affects whether or not we ever get to "Life After Capitalism"! Whether we try to reform the current system or fight for revolutionary change is a question that social movements have asked themselves for generations. We can't take your route of the "long, slow, haul" (fun though it sounds), trying to persuade capitalists to be nice, to take up the concerns of the anti-capitalist movement and manage their system in a more human-friendly way. If we do this, as Rosa Luxemburg wrote back in 1900, we "do not really choose a more tranquil, calmer and slower road to the same goal, but a different goal. Instead of taking a stand for the establishment of a new society [we] take a stand for surface modification of the old society" (like that 0.01% tax business...).

In Porto Alegre this year you reminded the movement to learn from history - the history of anti-capitalist movements is that if they get big enough and strong enough to be a real threat to capitalism, then all the resources of international capital will be lined up against them. Susan, you're the one who gets to speak from everyone's platforms: what are we going to do then? You have congratulated the movement for showing "startling maturity" and resisting provocations to violence. Unfortunately, we're not seeing the same emotional development from the riot police. The need for revolution stems from a problem you identified in Porto Alegre - "the dominant classes do not give up their privileges. In fact, they always want more". The reason we are talking about revolution in this era (as in any other) is that if we want to end the oppression and exploitation of capitalism, then we've got a fight on our hands.

If we want to win, we have to be able not only to learn from the past, but also to build up our strength for the future. This means that we not only need to go beyond trying to reform a system that needs getting rid of, but that we work out how to organise ourselves democratically and efficiently. That's the other thing we have to think about.

This question is vital now: I don't think we can rely on haphazard networks of networks, or on random collections of NGOs and groups like ATTAC becoming our unofficial, unelected, undemocratic leadership. We certainly can't avoid bureaucracy by having you and a few other organisations make yourself into the International Council of the World Social Forum (...says who?) and then deciding that all the regional social forums have to ban voting and political parties! We can give the participants in this movement a voice without our leadership structures becoming stalinist or "corporate" (otherwise how are we going to make any decisions After Capitalism?). What's the problem with voting? What about delegate structures, and a recallable, elected leadership that we all chose, rather than one that's there because it wrote books? Making people hide their affiliations, or making it impossible for them to see who is making decisions about how we mobilise or whether we can vote on anything, isn't going to help. Neither will making it even more impossible for them to get involved in that decision making! You seem to be really afraid of political parties, "much less 'revolutionary' parties", but we'll live to regret it if we let you tie our hands behind our backs by arguing against any kind of accessible international structures.

It's great that groups like ATTAC and Globalise Resistance in Britain are making it easier for young people to turn up to international mobilisations, but the time for "turning up" has passed - let's start building democratic structures locally and internationally so that our leaders aren't self-selecting any more.

In this era, revolution means a mass movement overthrowing its oppressors and building a new kind of society on an international level. Not, mind, by trying to put moral pressure on transnational companies, or by bending the ears of liberal politicians (now that's utopian...), but by using our power as the working class (i.e., the ones who have to do everything, and make everything, and move everything around) to work for a better world.

Well, I hope that clears things up a bit...

Rachel

✪Susan George is associate director of the Transnational Institute (Amsterdam) and vice-president of ATTAC France; author of How the Other Half Dies (1986), A Fate Worse than Debt (1989), The Lugano Report (1999), etc

WORLD BANK -

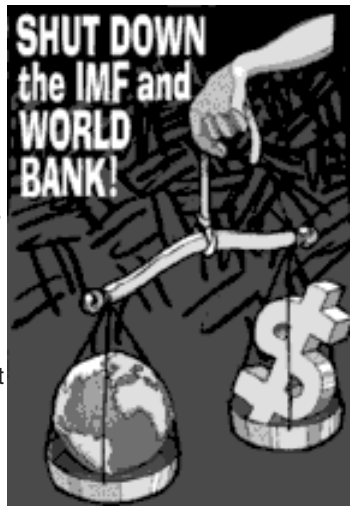
sucking the life out of millions

The World Bank was established on July 1st 1944 by a conference of 44 countries in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire and today is one of the largest exploiters of the third and developing world.

It consists of four different Monetary agencies: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association, the International Finance Corporation, and the Multilateral Finance Guarantee Agency and operates in conjunction with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), another product of Bretton Woods.

The bank was originally set up to regulate the global economy under the sponsorship and direction of the US with war-ravaged Europe in mind. But it quickly turned it's attention further south. It operates on a 'dollar-a-vote' system instead of a country-a-vote system, the result is that the North has 60% of the total votes with the US claiming 17%.

This voting power means that the Bank is effectively under the control of the rich industrialised countries. The Banks president is always a US citizen whilst the IMF always selects its Managing Director from Europe.



The Bank's primary focus is to make a profit, a quick buck here and there; a quick buck, which in this case usually amounts to millions and billions of dollars. It also opens up countries economies through forcing them to accept Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs)

How do they manage this? The Bank provides aid in the form of long term monetary loans to developing and third world countries that are on the brink of financial crisis. Often these countries with populations facing starvation or other catastrophic circumstances have no other choice but to accept this aid despite the extremely high interest rates and the strings that are attached.

Argentina, once known as the 'bread basket' of Latin America now has an enormous debt of around $726m after talks with the International Monetary Fund failed. On top of that it has defaulted on a $1 billion World Bank loan.

With the Bank's major priority being to promote International flows of capital for productive purposes and not to alleviate poverty, such countries as Argentina will continue to fall deeper into debt and financial crisis. More than half the population now live below the poverty line after ten years of borrowing from the Bank and following the SAPs of the IMF. There is no way out the debt spiral but to rise up against the World Bank and smash the debt!

by Lima in hampstead

IRAQ: Military conquest followed by economic conquest

What Tony Blair said: '*We don't touch it, and the US doesn't touch it' MTV, 7 March*

What Bush and Blair really did: *declared the US and UK the "occupying power" in Iraq, giving them total control of the country's oil revenues until an Iraqi government is established – not for at least a year. By then they will have a suitable puppet to rule Iraq and dispose of its oil wealth.*

Since the end of the war the US has frozen out anti-US parties while promoting the most right-wing forces in Iraqi society - tribal leaders, dodgy émigré, pro-US businessmen and police and generals from the old regime – in order to create a regime that will rule the Iraqi people in its own interest.

Thanks to the anti-war movement, George Bush knows he can't talk openly about selling off Iraq's oil resources to Exxon-Mobil and Shell. He leaves that to Fadhil Chalabi, leader of a gang of expatriates who have supported the US policies for years. In return, Chalabi will receive plenty of well-paying posts in the interim government. "We need to have a huge amount of money coming into the country," Chalabi has said. "The only way is to partially privatise the industry." They are even talking about building a pipeline to go through Israel to siphon out the Iraqi oil!

The biggest rip-off is that they will simply take Iraqi oil revenues by making Iraq pay for its own reconstruction. The US and UK destroyed Iraq through 12 years of war, continual bombing and sanctions that have reduced the economy to rubble. Now they're going to make a mint off the country's misery and devastation! When George Bush says "reconstruction" he means privatising everything and giving the contracts - worth an estimated $180 billion (£117 billion) over 10 years - to US multinationals. Some of the booty distributed so far:

✪ **Stevedoring Services of America** will "restore" the port of Um Qasr to working order – and make a cool $4.8 million doing it.

✪ Construction giant **Bechtel** was awarded the first contract to rebuild Iraqi infrastructure – to the tune of £680 million.

✪ A Washington DC based private education company **"Creative Associates"** will spend £41 million to train teachers and supply classrooms…for now the US has backed down from rewriting all the school text books with its own version of history.

- The US research agency **Research Triangle Institute** will design local government and vet local leaders to determine who is legitimate and who won't be allowed into the pro-US governmental system - for £111 million.

Even the medicines being brought in to "help" the people who should never have been bombed in the first place will mean huge profits for the US pharmaceutical companies. It isn't just the arms industry that is making a killing out of Iraq.

Many newscasters and experts poured scorn on the anti-war movement, saying that it's too simplistic to say this war was about oil. They're right. It was about oil, water, roads, trains, ports, drugs - everything. Bush and Blair were always banging on about a "free Iraq" - "Iraq at rock bottom prices" would be more like it!

This represents the recolonisation of Iraq – the US-sponsored Iraqi regime will be no more independent than the Iraqi monarchy was under the British Mandate in the 1920's. The US and IMF are discussing how to use the privatisation of Iraq as a starting point to opening up the economies of the other Middle East countries to the free market…and their multinationals. The US is planning to get the new Iraqi government to cede it permanent bases in Iraq - just to make sure the government or Iraqi people never get out of line, and to threaten the surrounding countries such as Syria and Iran. Imperialism isn't dead, it's alive and kicking.

ASYLUM: don't believe the hype

There's a logic that says immigrants are flooding our country, stealing our jobs, getting homes food and healthcare for free whilst the hard working among us get nothing. Our welfare system is struggling because we have to support them while they're drug -running and people-smuggling.

Senior police officers are blaming asylum seekers for rising crime, despite figures showing that asylum seekers are far more likely to be victims than the rest of the population .

And even when this rhetoric takes the relatively inoffensive and faintly believable form of concern that "we should look after our own before taking on others' problems" - it's a logic driven by nationalism, racism and neo-liberal economics.

The figures speak a different language from the press and parliamentary hyperbole. Last year Britain accepted only 1.9% of the worlds refugees although polls showed people to believe the figure to be 23%. Any claims of the country being flooded by 'them' seem to be at the very least exaggerated.

A sense emerges that there is something more insidious beneath the rhetoric.

There has never been one particular or even a consistent group of reasons for why some people are considered part of a nation and others excluded. People have been coming to Britain to seek refuge for the last 1000 years. The Huguenots fleeing catholic France, Spanish Jews and Moors after the expulsion, East European Jews escaping the pogroms, Italians, South Asians, East Asians, Irish, Black Africans. To most, these groups and their cultural influences have been positive and moulded into the collective psyche of Britain [if such a thing exists].

But from the implications that some groups of people do not belong here come the justifications for why they shouldn't be here. Racism and scapegoating are the almost inevitable results.

When Kent starting screening all asylum seekers for TB, they didn't find one person carrying it. But despite this, there are still claims that less than 0.2% of the population can bring the NHS to a grinding halt.

Asylum seekers receive £36.54 per week in benefits, 24% less than 'British' people. The only reason that they're on them is because the government has decreed that whilst applying for asylum they are not allowed to work, so making them utterly dependent on state handouts.

The housing crisis is not the fault of asylum seekers, but due to 'right to buy' and lack of investment into affordable housing.

Encouraged by the right-wing press, and not in the least bit discouraged by the government, asylum seekers have been made an acceptable target for racism. The step from attacking asylum seekers to attacking civil liberties has already started. By linking immigrants and the Muslim community at large with terrorism, the government has justified the introduction of 'entitlement' cards - a card to show what you're [not] entitled to have or be doing.

Last year, most applications for asylum came from Iraq, Afghanistan and Zimbabwe, a consequence of the West's war drives and economic policies. The simultaneous targeting of asylum seekers showing the government's refusal to deal with any negative consequences: they become labelled as 'bogus' economic migrants. Our need for clean toilets, picked fruit and gutted animals is obviously not enough of a priority to pay the workers in these jobs a reasonable amount. The only people who will do them are temporary immigrant labour, because it's comparatively more than they earned at home.

The crackdown on economic migrants is a consequence of free trade. Money and commodities can move freely, but if people moved freely to find better wages, wages across the globe would need to rise. This isn't new: during the industrial revolution in Britain factory owners lobbied the government to prevent people moving from the countryside to the cities to find better wages.

Asylum isn't the cause of the problems in this country. Refugees are one of the symptom of problems that go directly back to the government: war and its associated foreign policy, and exploitative trade and its associated local and international economic policies.

by marc in north london

BNP

by kuldip in clapham

A consequence of government lies and media propaganda against asylum seekers has been growing support for parties of the far right like the BNP.

Combined with the surge in Islamophobia which has accompanied the post S11 "War on Terror', is it any surprise that fascist parties scored some successes in last months local elections?

The British National Party now have 13 council seats across Britain. There is no room for complacency if we are to stop the British fascists matching the success of the likes of LePen in France.

The Labour government has encouraged the racist climate in its quest to appear tough on asylum. Recently Home Secretary David Blunkett, has withdrawn all state support for new refugees who do not claim asylum immediately upon entering the country and he has increased the numbers being held in detention and being forcibly deported.

This should come as no surprise, because even though Labour is based on the working class through its links with the trade unions, it has always ruled on behalf of big business.

Its neglect of some of Britain's poorest areas has caused increasing resentment amongst working class people. On the back of this the racist right have gained support through whipping up fear and hatred whilst offering populist solutions to the problems people face.

If we are to challenge the growth of the far right we cannot rely on the government or any state institutions such as the police or law courts. They cannot be consistently anti-racist because they serve the interests of capitalism, a system infused with racism since its birth on the back of the slave trade.

NIGERIA

nigeria: a case study of continental failure, a nation that was looked upon as the giant of the black continent. It is no doubt a testament to the failure of western-imperialism inspired liberal policies that has kept nigeria (amongst other third world countries) in perpetual misery, war, pain and political instability.

the nigerian state no doubt sees market forces as the messiah to the plethora of problems staring its in the face. since the inception of the pro-rich government of general olusegun obasanjo, the commanding heights of the nigerian economy have been sold to private vampires. we are being told regularly that until these keys sector are privatised, then problem of corruption and mismanagement will go unabated.

president obasanjo has been re-elected in an election that was fraught with irregularities and sent opponents crying foul, as a result of the unprecedented rigging that characterise it. the working class has know no respite since this government came into power, important social services have been commercialised - and more are about to be sold to local moneybags fronting for foreign capitalist goons. no doubt the repercussions of the pro-rich policies of the government of the day will trigger off a reaction that if properly harnessed by an organised mass revolutionary group (which is regrettably absent in nigeria) will lead to the overthrow of this unstable capitalist government.

we in the left recognise the huge potential that history has bestowed on the working class and the onus is on us to increase the consciousness of the people and to win the most conscious layer of the down-trodden masses of people to our side. This is no doubt a task of utmost necessity. as we wait patiently for the crises that will be triggered off by the policies, we know that by conscientious efforts and a determined and principled stand, the battles ahead will be fought to victory.

aluta continua, victoria acerta

eyinade
nigeria

MayDay greetings

hi comrades,
i am sorry i haven't mailed all this while, i have been a little broke, you know down here in nigeria you can only access the net through cyber-cafes. ya as regards the mayday celebration in nigeria, as usual there were march-pasts in the state capitals, including the federal capital Abuja. the march was characterised by calls for improved working conditions by workers. the union leadership called for increased working conditions, as well as improved pay packet.

it will be remembered that the federal government promised the workers a new salary package; this was partly implemented. the other part of the agreement was repudiated. this is in line with the IMF-inspired policies of the obasanjo-led government. various agreements signed by this administration notable among them was the agreement it signed with the academic staff union of university ASUU has been repudiated. this has culminated in a five-month strike. the academics have down-tooled. the government is not ready to shift ground. it is instructive to note that the allocation to the education sector this year is the lowest in recent times. the nation is a signatory to UNESCO, which commits it to allocating 26 percent of the total budget to education. this capitalist government of olusegun obasanjo has failed to honour this agreement. to add salt to injury, it has deliberately underfunded education. the right - wing leadership of the nigerian labour congress has not taken any decisive stand against the privatisation policy of the pro-rich government of olusegun obasanjo. the workers over the years have wage struggles against casualisation but something conspicuously missing is the principled stand by the leadership of the movement .

i got the current edition of your journal. i must commend you guys for a job well done. keep up the revolutionary work. i have succeeded in introducing this organisation to some of my friends and acquaintances. one day a group of revo will be formed right here in nigeria. i dream of that glorious day.

till i hear from you again. bye for now

yours in struggle
eyinade

The working class needs a political alternative that can really offer a radical solution to the problems posed by the rule of the bosses. This alternative will have to be revolutionary to really challenge racist class society and is something the left has so far failed to build.

Despite the burning need for a political answer the immigrant communities in places like Burnley, where the BNP now have 8 councillors, cannot wait for this alternative. Wherever the BNP are successful, racist attacks increase and a climate of fear prevails.

Last year Asian youth showed they are prepared to fight back in many towns across across the north of England. Revolution supported these acts of resistance and calls for the creation of organised community self defence squads to protect against fascists and racist attacks.

We also need to go on the offensive against the fascists, a policy of no platform needs to be implemented through a workers united front. Anti racists, communities, trade unions, youth and anti capitalists must force back the fascists every time they try to meet, march, campaign or stand in elections.

The Unity demonstrations in Burnley and Tipton on June 28th offer an opportunity to build local opposition in places where the BNP have won council seats. It is this self organisation and solidarity which can be the key to building a movement to smash the fascists.

FREE MÀRIO

Mario Bango –
tried for self-defence against Nazi attack

On the 25th March 2003, Mario Bango was found guilty of attempted murder by the district court in Bratislava, Slovakia. Now the whole trial starts again at the regional court level. This is Mario's 26th month in detention. The crime? Self-defence.

Nazi attack and self-defence

On March 10th 2001, Mario was with his brother, Edo, and their mother on their way to the market by bus, when a neo-nazi, Branislav Slamka, attacked Edo. Mario defended his twin with knife in his hand and the nazi received several stabs. Slamka was taken to hospital where he died after 3 weeks, and 18 year old Mario was taken into detention.

The Slovakia media was quick to begin a political campaign against Mario. Edo and Mario were smeared by the media which accuses them of stealing on the bus (no wonder, they are "Gypsy"), while Slamka is described as model student and patriot. The Slovak Parliament held minute of silence in his memory. Mario has been branded a murderer and violent person (because he had a knife). Yet around the world, international solidarity in support of Mario grew: in front of Slovak embassies gathered protest pickets in defence of Mario, the Slovak authorities received hundreds of protest e-mails, letters and faxes from anti-fascists, anti-racists, trade-unionists and human rights activists as well as artists. Self-defence is no offense!

Who is Mario?

Since his early youth, Mario has been an anti-fascist Roma activist. He feels a deep connection with the aspirations of the anti-capitalist movement, as well as the movement against Bush's war on Iraq, which he has condemned in his letters from prison. In jail, he joined the revolutionary Marxist (Trotskyist) League for Fifth International.

He is not violent but an intelligent young man. This was evidenced by specialist expertise of the psychologist during examination of his case. In the detention prison, Mario follows world events, comments on them in his letters and articles, reads many books, and has learned to read and write English.

Before he went into detention, he never before had any "problems" with the law. He had just finished his apprentice school and found a job – this is not easy for Roma in Slovakia, a racist society extremely prejudiced against Romas.

The picture of stupid hooligan, if not mobster, that the Slovak media tried to create just does not fit to Mario.

The knife in the pocket?

The opponents of Mario are exasperated at the fact that international anti-racist activists support a "murderer". Among their "absolutely irrefutable" arguments confirming Mario's murderous purposes and suggesting his violent nature is the fact he was carrying a knife.

Everybody who argues this way should walk in the footsteps of a young Roma in Bratislava just for one week. Then they would easily understand why Mario carried the knife. In Bratislava there are hundreds of militant Nazis and their supporters. Their acts are well known - since the "incident" between Slamka and Mario several murders have been committed by Nazis, including stabbing a man in his heart.

Roma are the target of Nazi attacks on a daily basis, many are afraid to go on streets. Both Mario and his brother Edo were targets of such attacks repeatedly. In one case Edo Bango was hospitalised for one week. The attacker not found and the case was dismissed.

Sure there are more effective ways of self-defence than that used by Mario, e.g. with pepper-spray you can debilitate a Nazi and you are not threatened with prosecution. But it is no reason not to support Mario just because he had not enough experience in self-defence against Nazis. The Slovak left is as yet small and not organised well enough to take on the fascist threat.

Police and racism

Many Nazi attacks remain unreported to the police. The sympathies of swathes of policemen with the far right are well known. Only a few victims of Nazi's notify the police because it just brings more trouble. Roma beaten to death in custody by Slovak policemen is just the tip of the iceberg. The Bango family experienced first hand the racism of the police after arrest of Mario. Police spoke about Mario's mother as a "gypsy cunt", and at the police station there were stickers of far right racist Slovak National Party, sympathisers with WWII period fascist Slovak state.

For young Roma, it is necessary to carry a weapon unless they want to become the calves for slaughter for the Nazis.

Objective trial?

Mario's trial was prejudiced from the outset. The judge, Skultety, gave a large amount of time to the presentation of Robertu Fico, chairmen of the populist party SMER and representing the Slamka family, while Mario and his advocate were constantly silenced and interrupted, and told not to politicise the case.

The judge supported everything that was said against Mario and disregarded anything that spoke in his favour. The judge was later found guilty for bribery in another case.

Self-defence is no offense!

The "democratic" defenders of law (in sense of sending gypsy and Communist Bango to jail) only abuse the political inexperience of the Slovak public, its anti-Roma sentiments and the fact that witnesses of Slamka's nazi activities fear to speak out. Thus the primitive picture of Mario as gypsy murderer - and Slamka as model student and Slovak.

But Mario's case has also wider social importance. The sentencing of Mario will be a message to the nazis that they can continue with their murders and attacks on everyone who they label as "de-nationed spoil of society". For Roma in Slovakia, this will be a message to not go out on the streets or to choose emigration. Self-defence against nazi attacks is no offense. Solidarity with Mario is on contrary appeal on everybody: do not let nazis dominate the streets!

Defend yourself!
Solidarity with Mario!

Standing against Mario is the mighty apparatus of racism - police, courts, majority of media and politicians.

But Mario is not alone. Many stand behind him, including several known figures. Let us name ex-Attorney General of USA, Ramsey Clark; or Austrian Green Party MP Ulrike Lunacek; singer of Chumbawamba Alice Nutter; and falsely prosecuted US black activist Mumia Abu Jamal. Also Czech philosopher and poet Egon Bondy and Slovak writer Jan Lenco – both living in Slovakia.

Before another marathon of trials we must step up solidarity with Mario. We call on all who are not indifferent to Mario's fate as well as results Mario's eventual sentence for confidence of Nazis to spread the word about the case, send protest letters, e-mails, faxes to Slovak authorities and join protest actions!

Contact World REVOLUTION!

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